

## **Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge**

### **December 2014 update from the Department of Early Learning**

We are disappointed to announce that Washington did not win the Federal Preschool Expansion grant. Eighteen states were [awarded funding](#) to expand preschool programs in order to increase the number of at-risk 4-year olds that start Kindergarten prepared.

This grant opportunity was very competitive, and Washington was competing against states with very strong preschool programs. The good news is that Washington's application scored very high, receiving 210.67 points of a possible 230 points – in other words, we had a great plan. However, because non-Race-to-the Top states were prioritized for funding our score was not high enough to win. There is already a conversation happening at the federal level about expanding funding to more states in the future, and Washington is well positioned to be competitive.

In the meantime, there is a lot of work that we can do without the federal grant, and DEL is moving forward on several key elements of the plan already. The Federal Grant would have helped Washington move more quickly on high-quality preschool expansion, but we have no doubt that we will get there! Several elements that are already in development include:

- Create new [BA Pathways](#) so more preschool teachers can attain BA degrees in early childhood
- Statewide implementation of evidence-based [curriculum training](#) and fidelity supports
- Provide enhanced professional development opportunities that increase preschool program capacity to serve children who may need [additional supports](#), including children with special needs and those who are dual language learners
- Creation of Early Achievers [Shared Services Alliances](#) to allow high-quality preschool programs to share resources and services with child care programs in their region who are participating in Early Achievers

Special thanks go out to our partners at Child Care Aware of Washington, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Thrive by Five Washington, Higher Education partners, the Office of the Governor, the Office of the Attorney General, Washington Association of Head Start and ECEAP, League of Education Voters, Children's Alliance, Educational Service Districts, and current ECEAP contractors for providing valuable feedback and input on the development of the application.

A synopsis of [Washington's Preschool Expansion Grant](#) is available on the DEL website.

#### **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation Releases New Study on Preschool**

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation recently released a review of the latest research on pre-K (publicly funded, center-based care for 3-5 year olds prior to kindergarten entry), including a review of child outcomes, costs structures, and elements of quality. They looked closely at four pre-K exemplar sites all of which have demonstrated academic gains that persist through elementary level at a cost structure that is sustainable. These programs share a set of common characteristics that allow them to foster high-quality instruction, as well as support educators and young learners. These elements include:

- Conditions for an enabling environment
- High-quality instruction led by B.A.-holding teachers
- Effective use of curriculum, standards and data

- Compensation consistent with K-12 among others

This work is intended to provide a valuable template for improving state and federal pre-K programs. ([\*Lessons from Research and the Classroom: Implementing High-Quality Pre-K that Makes a Difference for Young Children\*](#), Jim Minervino & Robert Pianta, Ph.D., September 2014).

#### Subscriber link

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Thanks for everything you do to support young children in Washington!

Washington's Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge Performance Tracker			
EARLY ACHIEVERS: LEVELS 2 TO 5			
As of October 31, 2014	Registered in EA	2014 Year End Targets	2014 Year End Progress
<b>Total # of Programs</b>	<b>2,425</b>	<b>3,483</b>	<b>70%</b>
Head Start and ECEAP Sites	214	483	44%
Licensed Child Care Programs	2,211	3,001	74%
<i>Family Home Child Care</i>	1,343	2,182	62%
<i>Child Care Centers</i>	868	819	106%
<b>Total Children Served by EA</b>	<b>67,522</b>	<b>77,859</b>	<b>87%</b>
Head Start Sites and ECEAP Sites	11,106	16,983	65%
Licensed Child Care Programs	56,416	60,876	93%
<i>Family Home Child Care</i>	8,743	13,996	62%
<i>Child Care Centers</i>	47,673	46,880	102%